

CANCER EPIDEMIOLOGY: METHODS OF STUDY. By A. M. Lilienfeld, E. Pedersen and J. E. Dowd. (Pp. xiii+165; 62s.). London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

THE purpose of this book is stated by the authors to be to present epidemiological methods to those interested in cancer who may not be epidemiologists. The book would also be of value to those whose interests are in other chronic diseases and who wish to investigate them epidemiologically.

Some basic concepts of epidemiology are first described such as the variation in the incidence of disease in population groups with different characteristics, e.g. age, sex, occupation, habits and other characteristics. The measurement of the incidence and prevalence of cancer in such groups by the use of mortality and morbidity rates is described and the precautions which have to be taken to standardise these measurements for other relevant variables and the need to minimise observer variation, bias or error. The methods and relative merits of retrospective and prospective surveys are set out and there is a useful discussion on the measurement of risks of developing cancer and the ways in which first, association, and later causation, can be established. The development of our knowledge of the causal relationship between cigarette smoking and lung cancer is used to illustrate the advance in knowledge of this relationship through retrospective and prospective population studies and through the demonstration of biological and pathological mechanisms. The need for biological plausibility before accepting a causal hypothesis is emphasised and evidence of a definite dose risk relationship helps to establish the existence of a carcinogenic cause.

There are two useful appendices, the first describing some elementary statistical procedures, and the second consisting of an excerpt on the classification of neoplasms from the latest W.H.O. International Classification of Diseases. J.P.

ANTIBIOTICS AND CHEMOTHERAPY. By Lawrence P. Garrod, M.D.(Camb.), Hon. L.D.(Glasg.), F.R.C.P., and Francis O'Grady, M.D.(Lond.), M.Sc.(Lond.), M.C.Path. Second Edition. (Pp. viii +475; figs. 34; 50s.). Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1968.

THE second edition of this book commemorates the late Professor Mary Barber, who shared the authorship of the notable first edition, and the second edition continues to compel the reader's admiration for its use of carefully selected practical information and its common sense. Anyone in any way concerned with the choice and use of antibiotic and chemotherapeutic drugs is bound to find information and advice of great value in it: it will appeal alike to under-graduate and post-graduate, practitioner and consultant.

This work is clearly the fruit of great experience and critical thought and the main theme which runs through the whole is the effective employment of the drugs discussed. The text is clear, direct and positive; it is notably firm where others might hedge—e.g. the comment about the use of antitoxin in the treatment of gas gangrene on page 298. Apart from the value of the text in general there is a particularly useful final chapter on "Laboratory Control" which is of great interest to anyone concerned with laboratory medicine.

There can be no doubt that a copy of this book should be found in every hospital and every laboratory connected with clinical microbiology. Those which do not possess it are earnestly advised to remedy this deficiency.

The measure of the real value of this book is the number of difficult situations for which it provides constructive opinion and practical help. It is a rare pleasure to be able to commend it without reservation to the general practitioner, the consultant and the student alike. W.S.